



PALO ALTO JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB
1978-1979

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The Junior Club 1941 – 1985

THE FORTIES:

In March of 1941, a group of young thirteen young women affiliated with the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, founded the Palo Alto Junior Woman's Club. The purpose of the Junior Clubs, which had first been established by the GFWC in 1932, was to encourage volunteerism among younger women. One of the leading figures in the founding was Mrs. Clement Arnold, then president of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, who saw the need for the new organization. According to the rules set up in August, 1941, the Juniors would be in charge of one Woman's Club luncheon per year and be allowed to meet in the Club House on the second Tuesday of every month. These young women quickly established a connection with the district federation. Their by-laws committed them to be involved in local civic, philanthropic, educational, and social activities. In the fall of 1941, they selected the chrysanthemum as their club flower and devised a pledge:

I pledge my loyalty to the Junior Clubwomen,
By doing better than ever before what work I have to do:
By being prompt, honest, courteous, by living each day
Trying to accomplish something, not merely to exist.

By the mid-1940s, the Juniors had established a routine of bi-monthly meetings (second and fourth Tuesday evenings) with one session devoted to business and the other to sewing. The "girls" as they originally called themselves, held one business meeting and one social event each month.

The Juniors hit the ground running in the summer of 1941, by entertaining and then holding a barbecue for twenty-five soldiers stationed at Moffett Field. Money was raised through their dues and activities such as bake sales, bazaars, rummage sales, raffles, clothing drives, concerts, card parties, dinner parties (one spaghetti dinner event charged 55 cents), dances and amateur theatricals. They donated money to provide a new chesterfield sofa for the AWVS (American Women's Voluntary Services) lounge, baked cookies which went into "Santa Packages" for soldiers at Dibble Hospital and they made a cash gift to The American Red Cross both for recordings and for a new phonograph. They also served as hostesses at Palo Alto's Hospitality House.

After World War II, the Juniors continued their civic, philanthropic, educational, and social commitments. *The Palo Alto News* chronicled their busy schedule of events and fundraising which supported the arts and especially programs for children. They continued to hold dances, bazaars, raffles, etc. donating funds to local libraries, play activities for pre-school children, the Youth Conservation League, the Palo Alto Youth Council, the Teen Center, the Morning Glory School for the Blind, the San Mateo Blood Bank, the Family Service Association. In addition, they invited prominent women to speak at their meetings, entertained the members of the Woman's Club, and maintained their connection to the district federation. Membership grew.

THE FIFTIES:

Juniors expanded their busy round of activities. In 1950, they sponsored a public Bridge-Canasta-Pinocle party to stimulate interest and raise money; they netted a whopping \$272 on a rummage sale and raffle featuring antique and homemade linens; they compiled and sold a cook book of their favorite recipes. Throughout the decade, they welcomed and initiated new members. Three Juniors were elected to positions in the California Federation of Junior Women's Clubs, while the Palo Alto Juniors received special recognition for their work on behalf of teens (the Conga Room at the Palo Alto Community Center) and children (the Children's Theatre.) The Juniors supported a variety of youth causes and joined other civic organizations in supporting the "Paly High Boosters' Club. Local journalists, including Herb Caen, described the energy and drive of the Juniors' project to insure and expand safely features on 101/Bayshore and their efforts to provide a mobile unit for the Junior Museum. They contributed to the purchase of incubators for Palo Alto Hospital and served there as "grey ladies." The Junior club maintained a good rapport with their "mother" club, the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, whose Corresponding Secretary wrote, "The Woman's Club of Palo Alto wishes to congratulate the Junior Women's Club for their outstanding achievements of the past year. The part you played in 'Build a Better Community' deserves our special praise and acclamation." She concluded her accolade with an invitation to the Juniors to celebrate a Founder's Day event together at the Clubhouse.

THE SIXTIES:

During the sixties, the Juniors carried on as before, with special emphasis on service to the needs of the community. Members continued to hold office in the federation and to win awards, notably for their involvement in Palo Alto's Society for the Blind. In 1963, when the "Community Association for the Retarded, Inc." (Now Abilities United) was founded, the Juniors were quick to lend their energy and support by holding a wine tasting event at the Caravan Inn. The proceeds went to the Bracken Guild, an affiliate of the Community Association for the Retarded. One of the achievements of the 1960s' Juniors was to compile and collate a "how to" notebook on how to found and run a junior club. It contained many pragmatic recommendations on interacting with local clubs and the federation. The absence of an up-to-date scrapbook containing details about activities suggests that the Juniors were beginning to look for new directions in which to invest their energies by the mid-sixties.

THE SEVENTIES:

The relationship between the Juniors and the PAWC became strained by the 1970's. The Juniors felt increasingly disconnected from the Woman's Club and wanted stronger ties with the Federation. In a unanimous vote at their first business meeting, September 9, 1971, the members present (77% of total membership) chose to seek new sponsorship and a stronger relationship with the Federation. They hoped by their decision to foster greater "sharing of ideas, information, friendship and leadership," which they felt were not forthcoming from the Woman's Club. Their club, they argued, was more involved

“in the problems of the community” than the PAWC. Their letter to the Woman’s Club addressed these concerns as well a lack of mutual understanding between the two clubs. Palo Alto women were not joining the Juniors and their overall membership was declining. To address these issues, they began to solicit and accept members from throughout the Bay Area. The Juniors 1978-1979 yearbook lists only nine members.

THE EIGHTIES:

As the 1980s began, the issues between the Junior Women’s Club and the Woman’s Club were not resolved, although they continued to collaborate on some activities, such as the Fall Faire and a Christmas party. In March of 1981, the Junior Coordinator Helen Tuomy arranged for a 40th anniversary event for the Juniors with participation of both Juniors and PAWC members. This celebration, although appreciated, was too late to mend the relationship. Later that year, the Juniors officially changed their name to Foothill Junior Woman’s Club. The PAWC rejected this decision. Problems with declining membership and tension with the Woman’s Club continued to plague the Junior Club. By 1985, the Junior Woman’s Club had essentially ceased to exist.

1971-1972

REQUEST FOR NEW SPONSORSHIP

The Palo Alto Junior Women's Club has elected to pursue as a major project in 1971-72 the strengthening of our activities in club federation. We, the club as a whole, have analyzed our past federation activities and have determined that our sponsorship by the Woman's Club of Palo Alto is a major handicap to our growth in federation.

On August 26 we held an informal "rap" session attended by 61% of our membership with the purpose of getting the year started and "getting it all together". This session was where our federation problem was identified and we decided to sleep on the problem until the next formal business meeting. On September 9 our club held its first business meeting after the "rap" session and under new business a motion of investigating new sponsorship and communicating this to the Woman's Club of Palo Alto was made, seconded, discussed, and passed by a unanimous vote of the 77% of the members in attendance. A committee of five members was formed to communicate to the District and State and to explore any means of obtaining new sponsorship for the club. We do not wish to leave the federation and are seeking direction as to obtaining sponsorship within the federation. The following are the points and reasons for our action as recorded in the minutes of the September 9 business meeting.

Federation is sharing of ideas, information, friendships and leadership. Federation doesn't exist between the Woman's Club of Palo Alto and the Palo Alto Junior Women's Club. It is difficult to explain federation to new members when federation isn't at work between the two clubs.

There is no development of ideas between the two clubs. The two clubs have different ways of serving the community. The General Club serves

with its financial assistance while the Juniors serve by getting involved in the problems of the community. We respect and accept the General Club's way, and we would like the same consideration, interest, and acceptance of our methods of service.

Little information is exchanged between the two clubs. Therefore, respect and appreciation is not generated between the two for their respective projects and activities. Little support is given or received for either club's activities.

Friendships aren't fostered between members of the two clubs. The General Club displays a patronizing attitude toward us instead of accepting us as mature federated clubwomen. We have a feeling that they want us to serve them rather than serve with them.

Leadership training is lacking. The relationship between the two clubs is in name only. The only leadership training is available through our Junior District and State officers and chairmen.

We want a sponsor who is active in building our club. We want a sponsor who will actively support our projects and who will allow us to actively support theirs. We also want a sponsor who has projects we can afford to support. We want a sponsor who will actively prepare our club members for membership in G.F.W.C.. We want a sponsor who will allow us to represent ourselves as being of service to communities other than Palo Alto. This is most important since half of our membership is from adjacent communities and the majority of our projects are for these other communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Palo Alto Junior Women's Club Membership